

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-16 are pending in the application, with claims 2, 7 and 12 being the independent claims. Claim 1 was previously cancelled.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Information Disclosure Statements

In the Office Action, the Examiner did not indicate consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed by Applicants on December 3, 2002. The filing of this IDS is evidenced in PAIR. Furthermore, the Examiner did not provide an acknowledged copy of the Form PTO-1449 that was submitted with that IDS. In the Office Action, the Examiner requested that Applicants "resubmit any I.D.S., not expressly respond[ed] to in this action, with appropriate documentation." Accordingly, Applicants submit herewith a Second Supplemental IDS that includes a listing of all the references provided by Applicants in the IDS filed on December 3, 2002 along with some additional references (copies of which are provided where appropriate). Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider these references and provide Applicants with an acknowledged copy of the corresponding Forms PTO/SB/08A and PTO/SB/08B. If the Examiner does not have copies of the references identified in the IDS filed on

December 3, 2002, Applicants would be happy to provide an additional copy of such references upon request by the Examiner.

Nonstatutory Double Patenting Rejection

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-16 under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over the claims of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,493,687, 5,560,035, 5,682,546, 5,838,986, 6,044,449 and 6,249,856. Without acquiescing to the merits of this rejection, Applicants have submitted herewith a terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(c) to obviate this rejection. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the obviousness-type double-patenting rejection of claims 2-16 be withdrawn.

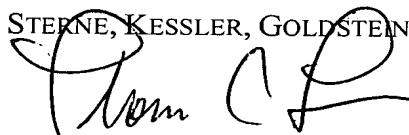
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Addendum

1. 5,493,687, 5,560,035, 5,682,546, 5,838,986, 6,044,449 and 6,249,856